

## John A Knox

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**From:** John A Knox  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 8, 2019 4:45 AM  
**To:** Neil Jacobs - NOAA Federal  
**Subject:** Re: Consequences of NOAA action

Neil,

As an appointed official in the Trump Administration, please do not insult my intelligence by saying that people should divorce themselves from politics. Physician, heal thyself, as the Good Book says.

"I know that Alabama was in the original forecast. They thought it would get it as a piece of it. It was supposed to go — actually, we have a better map than that, which is going to be presented, where we had many lines going directly — many models — each line being a model. And they were going directly through. And, in all cases, Alabama was hit — if not lightly, in some cases pretty hard. Georgia, Alabama — it was a different route. They actually gave that a 95% chance probability."

If you call out the NWS Birmingham for a a 5-30% chance Alabama would see TS winds, then *as a scientist* you should also call out the guy who said publicly that there was a **95%** probability that Alabama was going to get hit--in some cases pretty hard. By tropical-storm-force winds in Dothan?

That guy was President Donald Trump.

Why don't you call him out?

Well, he's your boss! He's the President!

Ah, but those are political, not scientific, considerations.

Which brings us back to your absurd claim that this is about politics. No, it's not. Not even Ryan Maue and Joe Bastardi are on your side in this one. James Spann, who is not anyone's idea of a liberal, is not on your side either. (But he is impervious to the sliming that your boss and his enablers attempt, because James has unassailable integrity from 40+ years of service to his community. Not even the Tarnisher-in-Chief can touch him.) Do you not realize the unanimity of the meteorological community on this issue? What bubble are you living in?

I'm very sad for what has happened on your watch. As retired Rear Admiral David Titley has said, "Moral cowardice."

Good luck in Huntsville on Tuesday.

John

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**From:** Neil Jacobs - NOAA Federal <neil.jacobs@noaa.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 8, 2019 3:50 AM  
**To:** John A Knox <johnknox@uga.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: Consequences of NOAA action

[External Sender]

John,

This whole thing is being blow out of proportion, and I am in a completely horrible position. I wish people would divorce themselves from politics. The NHC data said there was a 5-30% chance Alabama would see TS winds. The office in Birmingham said there was absolutely no chance of any impacts. And while everyone suspected they were likely right, an objective assessment of the data said the chance was 5-30%, not 0%. The WFO did absolutely the right thing to respond and calm fears of people who thought they were going to take a direct hit. If only the tweet was something more consistent with the low probabilities forecasted by NHC. Nobody wants to undermine the NHC guidance. We are an objective science agency. We are not taking sides on a political issue. I love this agency and what they do. Please talk to Gary Lackmann or even Kelvin. You have no idea how hard I'm fighting to keep politics out of science. We are an objective science agency, and we won't and never will base any decisions on anything other than science.

-Neil

On Sep 8, 2019, at 1:35 AM, John A Knox <[johnknox@uga.edu](mailto:johnknox@uga.edu)> wrote:

Neil,

In the interests of full disclosure, I thought I should share with you what I have shared publicly on Facebook tonight with regard to the scandal occurring under your leadership at NOAA.

As my Facebook followers know, I am a native of Birmingham, Alabama. I've known the meteorologists at the NWS Birmingham since the 1970s; I attended high school with some of their children in the 1980s; I spent a spring interning at that office in 1986; and I co-dedicated my introductory meteorology textbook (now in its fifth edition) to one of the NWS meteorologists in Birmingham.

I speak only on behalf of myself.

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Bye, Neil. I really liked your work at Panasonic and appreciated that you spoke to my Data Assimilation class. But the program I am undergraduate coordinator of has Student Learning Outcomes that include ethics. Specifically, "Know and employ the principles of proper ethical conduct within meteorology and the atmospheric sciences regarding professional conduct and

what the science can and cannot accurately and adequately predict [see (AMS Guidelines for Professional Conduct; Article XII of the AMS Constitution) <http://www.ametsoc.org/ab.../organizationpdfs/constitution.pdf>] And this learning outcome is modeled on AMS recommendations for the B.S. in atmospheric sciences. I think your conduct here is a violation of that learning outcome and in particular is in support of statements by the President that run afoul of "what the science can and cannot accurately and adequately predict." So, no more visits to my classroom, Neil.

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Sincerely,

John Knox

Dr. John A. Knox  
Professor, UGA Department of Geography  
Undergraduate Coordinator, UGA Atmospheric Sciences Program  
NWA T. Theodore Fujita Research Achievement Award, 2010  
AMS Edward N. Lorenz Teaching Excellence Award, 2020  
AMS Fellow, 2020